

Washington, D.C. –Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) voted for the Transportation and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Appropriations Bill (HR 3288), which the House approved by a 256-168 margin. The Congressman advocated for and included much-needed resources to further improve Rt. 422 and to aid one of the regions historic institutions, Valley Forge Military Academy and College.

“With this bill, I seek to improve transportation infrastructure and enhance housing and community development, two areas which are in great need of attention during this economic crisis,” said the Congressman. “In particular, I was pleased to support much needed additional funding for Route 422 and Valley Forge Military Academy and College, an institution I greatly respect.”

Specifically, the bill includes \$700,000 to reconstruct the US 422 bridge over the Schuylkill River and its interchanges with PA 23 and PA 363. These are designed to replace a structurally deficient bridge, improve safety, and reduce congestion for the US 422 corridor as well as in adjacent communities. This provision builds on more than \$1 million in funding Congressman Sestak has secured for related Route 422 projects during the last two years.

In addition, the bill contains \$300,000 for the Valley Forge Military Academy and College’s (VFMC) renovation of Von Steuben Hall as part of the school’s Cadet Diversification Enhancement Initiative. Since 1928, Valley Forge has been committed to a character-based education built on the foundation of the “five cornerstones” —academic excellence, character development, personal motivation, physical development and leadership. The funding will be used for facility and infrastructure improvements associated with the continued assimilation of women into the ranks of the Valley Forge Corps of Cadets. In May 2008, seven women graduated from VFMC with their Associates’ degree. More than 50 women have applied for admission for the next school year, but VFMC is only equipped to house 19 women because of serious housing constraints, and urgently needs to renovate, upgrade and modify Von Steuben Hall, a building constructed in 1905 for an all-male student body. That facility must offer a minimum of 45 rooms for women cadets. Building renovation will include energy-efficient lighting, thermal windows, and water conservation-type plumbing fixtures.

“The provisions in this bill will help people in their daily lives by making it easier to get to and from work, address housing needs, and help build stronger communities. The funding that it allocates will also make the systems more environmentally friendly and create much needed jobs in the regions affected,” added the Congressman. “I work every day to improve the lives of

my constituents and this bill does that many ways.”

Details of HR 3288:

## INVESTING IN NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Federal Transit Administration: \$10.48 billion, \$148 million above the request and \$352 million above 2009 including:

New Construction: \$1.83 billion, equal to the President’s Request and \$18.1 million above 2009, for Capital Investment Grants for commuter rail or other light rail systems to increase public use of mass transit, alleviate traffic congestion, reduce gas consumption, and save commuters time and money.

Transit Formula Grants: \$8.34 billion, equal to the President’s Request and \$182.6 million above 2009, for Formula and Bus Grants for on-going capital and operating needs of urban and rural transit systems, including funding for new buses, stations, intermodal facilities, and technology improvements.

Capital and Preventive Maintenance Grants for WMATA: \$150 million in new funding for grants to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority to address safety deficiencies and to maintain the nation’s subway system.

Amtrak: \$1.5 billion, matching the request and \$10 million below 2009, to support the national passenger rail system.

High Speed/Intercity Passenger Rail Grants: \$4 billion, \$3 billion above the request and \$4 billion above 2009, to provide grants to states or Amtrak for high speed/intercity passenger rail to create a 21st Century passenger rail system that reduces congestion and environmental impacts. The Secretary may use or transfer \$2 billion to a National Infrastructure Bank if one is authorized by the end of the fiscal year.

Highway Infrastructure: \$41.1 billion, the same as the request and \$407 million above 2009, to improve and repair our nation’s aging highway infrastructure.

Airport Modernization, Safety and Efficiency Grants: \$3.5 billion, matching the request and \$500,000 above 2009, to ease congestion and prepare our nation’s airports for growing use.

Modernizing Air Traffic Control: \$2.9 billion, equal to the request and \$183 million above 2009, including \$785 million to modernize the Federal Aviation Administration’s air traffic control system.

## PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO VULNERABLE POPULATIONS IN TOUGH TIMES

Public Housing Capital Fund: \$2.5 billion, \$256 million above the request and \$50 million above 2009, for Public Housing Authorities to make critical repairs and improvements to public housing units and improve living conditions for residents.

Public Housing Operating Fund: \$4.8 billion, \$200 million above the request and \$345 million above 2009, for maintenance, crime prevention and energy costs. HUD and the PHAs have determined \$5.3 billion is needed in 2010.

Section 8 Tenant Based Vouchers: \$18.2 billion, \$406 million above the request and \$1.2 billion above 2009, to support 2.1 million vouchers to individuals and families.

Veterans Affairs Housing Vouchers: \$75 million, matching 2009 and \$75 million above the request, to provide 10,000 housing vouchers for homeless veterans.

Section 8 Project Based Vouchers: \$8.7 billion, \$600 million above the request and \$1.6 billion above 2009, to provide affordable housing to 1.3 million low-income families and individuals, two-thirds of whom are elderly or disabled.

Housing for the Elderly: \$1 billion, \$235 million above the President's request and the level provided in fiscal year 2009, to rehabilitate and build housing for low-income elderly people. Ten eligible seniors are on the waiting list for every one unit of housing available.

Housing for the Disabled: \$350 million, \$100 million above the request and 2009, for grants to rehabilitate and build housing for disabled people.

Homeless Assistance Grants: \$1.85 billion, \$56 million above the request and \$173 million above 2009, for grants to local communities to provide housing and services for the homeless. This increase will help fund new competitive projects in communities with capacity and demonstrated need for this housing.

Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation: \$196.8 million, \$30 million above the request and \$15.8 million above 2009, to provide counseling for families in danger of losing their homes to foreclosure.

Housing for Persons with AIDS: \$350 million, \$40 million above the request and 2009, to help address homelessness within this vulnerable population.

Housing Counseling Assistance: \$70 million, \$30 million below the request and \$5 million above 2009, to continue pre-purchase counseling for prospective homebuyers.

## REVITALIZING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Community Development Block Grants: \$4.6 billion, \$174 million above the request and \$725 million above 2009, to fund community and economic development projects in 1,180 localities. Brownfields Redevelopment: \$25 million, \$15 million above 2009 and \$25 million above the request, to remove blight and spur economic development on formerly vacant commercial and industrial sites.

HOPE VI: \$250 million, \$130 million above 2009, to fund competitive grants to transform neighborhoods of extreme poverty into sustainable mixed-income neighborhoods through the demolition of severely distressed public housing.

## RURAL COMMUNITIES

Essential Air Service: \$175 million, matching the request and \$38.8 million above 2009, to continue essential air service to small and/or rural communities. The Administration has committed to working with Congress to develop a more sustainable program.

Rural Transit Formula Grants: \$607 million, \$69 million above 2009, to support public transportation in rural communities.

Rural Innovation Fund: \$25 million, matching the request, for a new initiative that will encourage innovative practices in rural communities to further economic development.

Native American Housing Block Grants: \$750 million, \$105 million above the request and 2009, to rehabilitate and construct housing on Native American lands.

## TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

Aviation Safety Programs: \$1.2 billion, \$15.4 million above the request and \$67.2 million above 2009, including \$9.5 million to hire additional flight standard inspectors and \$4.5 million to hire additional aircraft certification inspection staff.

Highway Safety Programs: \$867 million for the programs of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the same as the request and \$11.2 million above 2009, to make America's roads safer by encouraging safety belt use, preventing drinking and driving, improving child safety, motorcyclist safety, and other initiatives.

Pipeline Safety: \$105.2 million, matching the request and \$12 million above 2009, for the state pipeline safety grant program. This increase will allow a 70/30 federal/local match for pipeline safety grants, which is a five percent increase in the federal match over fiscal year 2009.

Federal Railroad Safety Research: \$64 million, \$30 million above the request, and \$30.2 million above 2009, for passenger and freight railroad research and development. The increase will enable FRA to conduct research into high speed rail and advanced diesel locomotive design.

National Transportation Safety Board Investigators: \$99.2 million, \$3.8 million above the request and \$8.2 million above 2009, to provide additional investigators to respond to and investigate transportation crashes.

## SIGNIFICANT CUTS

Choice Neighborhoods: No funding for this new initiative, requested by the President at \$250 million. This program is unauthorized, and duplicative of activities in the HOPE VI program.

Energy Innovation Fund: The President requested \$100 million for this fund and the bill provides

\$50 million. Some activities of this new initiative are duplicative of other Federal programs, particularly at the Department of Energy.

National Infrastructure Bank: No funding directly provided, however, bill language is included to allow the Secretary to use or transfer up to \$2 billion to the Bank if authorized by the end of the fiscal year.

### IMPORTANT POLICY ITEMS

Sustainable Communities Initiative: The bill includes \$150 million within the Community Development Block Grants program, as requested in the President's budget, for a new sustainable communities initiative to provide grants to assist local communities with integrated housing, transportation and energy planning efforts.

Loan limits for FHA and GSEs: The bill extends the loan limits enacted in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act through the end of the 2010 fiscal year.

Reverse Mortgages: The bill provides for the continuation of the Home Equity Conversion Mortgage program, which provides an important option for seniors to remain in their homes.

Flight 93 National Memorial: \$4 million to improve road access to the Flight 93 Memorial in Shanksville, Pennsylvania

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including as Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.*